

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1, 3, 7-12 and 14-27 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3 and 7 are amended, and claim 13 is cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. Support for the claims can be found throughout the specification, including the original claims and the drawings. Withdrawal of the rejections in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner is thanked for the indication that claims 17-27 are allowed, and that claims 7-16 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Independent claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the subject matter of allowable claim 13. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1, as well as claims 3, 7-12, 14-16, 28 and 29, which depend therefrom, should be in condition for allowance. It is further submitted that, as all of pending claims 1, 3, 7-12 and 14-27 should be in condition for allowance, the application should also be in condition for allowance.

II. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

The Office Action rejects claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 4,730,630 to Ranft (hereinafter "Ranft"). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

As set forth above, the subject matter of allowable claim 13 has been incorporated into independent claim 1. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 1 is not

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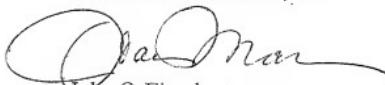
anticipated by Ranft, and thus the rejection of independent claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Ranft should be withdrawn.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes that any additional changes would place the application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned **Joanna K. Mason**, at the telephone number listed below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this, concurrent and future replies, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 16-0607 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,
KED & ASSOCIATES, LLP



John C. Eisenhart
Registration No. 38,128
Joanna K. Mason
Registration No. 56,408

P.O. Box 221200
Chantilly, Virginia 20153-1200
(703) 766-3777 JCE:JKM:bld

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Please direct all correspondence to Customer Number 34610